

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY NEA/P:MVANORDER:RGH

APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN

S/PRS - HR. FUNSETH (INFO)

H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)

EUR/P - MR. JERABEK

IO/P - MR. BLACHLY

NEA/ARN - MR. BULLEN

AF/P - MRS. RUSSELL

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY SANA

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY DOHA

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AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

USMISSION GENEVA
USCINCEUR

UNCLAS STATE 224311

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL
CINCEUR FOR POLAD

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR
SEPTEMBER 19, 1975:

Q. TELL US ABOUT THE JORDAN THING BEING ALL CLEARED UP.

A. AS YOU KNOW, THERE
HAS BEEN SOME MISUNDERSTANDING. IT
HAS BEEN CLEARED UP, AND WE WILL PROCEED AS PLANNED.

Q. SOME MISUNDERSTANDING BY WHOM?

A. I THINK BOB FUNSETH WENT INTO THIS YESTERDAY.

Q. NO HE DIDN'T.

A. WELL, I AM NOT GOING TO GO INTO THE DETAILS ABOUT THE
MISUNDERSTANDING. BOB TOLD YOU YESTERDAY WE WERE IN THE

PROCESS OF TRYING TO OBTAIN CLARIFICATION. THIS
CLARIFICATION HAS BEEN OBTAINED. IT HAS BEEN CLEARED UP,
AND WE WILL PROCEED AS PLANNED.

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Q. CAN YOU SAY WHETHER THE JORDANIANS ARE ACCEPTING THE
SAME DEAL THAT WAS ARRANGED AS OF YESTERDAY? IN OTHER
WORDS, WE HAVE--THE PRESIDENT, STATE DEPARTMENT--NOTHING
HAS CHANGED FROM THIS END?

A. RIGHT. WHEN I SAY WE WILL PROCEED AS PLANNED, THAT
IS OBVIOUS, ABSOLUTELY.

Q. WHERE DID THE CLARIFICATION COME FROM, BOB?

A. WHAT?

Q. WHERE DID THE CLARIFICATION COME FROM, FROM AMMAN?

A. WELL, AS WE SAID YESTERDAY, WE WERE SEEKING CLARIFICATIONS ON THE JORDANIAN STATEMENT YESTERDAY WITH OUR AMBASSADOR IN AMMAN, WHO WAS TALKING WITH THE JORDANIAN GOVERNMENT, AND THIS HAS BEEN CLEARED UP, AND WE WILL PROCEED.

Q. CLARIFICATION ABOUT WHAT?

A. I DO NOT WANT TO GET INTO THE DETAILS, KEN.

Q. WAIT A MINUTE, PLEASE. THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE HEARD A PUBLIC STATEMENT BY THE JORDANIAN GOVERNMENT SAYING THAT THE TERMS PUT FORWARD IN A LETTER WERE INSULTING TO THE NATIONAL DIGNITY OF JORDAN. THERE ARE PEOPLE ON THE HILL WHO WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHETHER THE JORDANIAN GOVERNMENT IS PREPARED TO GO FORWARD WITH THE DEAL UNDER THOSE SPECIFIC TERMS OR WHETHER THERE ARE SOME PARTS THAT THEY DON'T LIKE AND HAVE REJECTED, BECAUSE THE HOUSE HAS UNTIL MONDAY TO ACT--OR THE SENATE HAS UNTIL MONDAY.

A. I THOUGHT I ANSWERED THE QUESTION THAT JOHN ASKED WHEN HE ASKED THE BASIS ON WHICH WE WOULD PROCEED, I.E., WITH REGARD TO THE PRESENT LETTER OF OFFER, THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER. I REPLIED, IN ESSENCE, "YES, IT IS OBVIOUS THAT THAT IS THE BASIS ON WHICH WE WILL PROCEED."

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Q. THEN WE ARE NOT SEEKING ANY PUBLIC CLARIFICATION FROM THE JORDANIAN GOVERNMENT, WHICH MADE A PUBLIC DISCLAIMER OF ACCEPTANCE?

A. NO.

Q. I WANT TO BE SURE TO BEAT THIS DEAD HORSE ENOUGH. THERE HAS BEEN NO PROMISE ON THE PART OF THE UNITED STATES, OR NO INTENTION TO ALTER ANY OF THE WORDINGS IN THE LETTER TO CONGRESS, BECAUSE THAT WASN'T IN THE CONTRACT?

A. ABSOLUTELY. THAT IS WHAT I TRIED TO SAY.

Q. WELL, BOB, YOU'RE SAYING THAT THERE'S BEEN NO CHANGE IN THE SUBSTANCE OF THE LETTER, OF THE AGREEMENT--THAT EVERYTHING'S BEEN SETTLED NOW WITHOUT ANY SUCH CHANGE. SO, OBVIOUSLY, THE ONLY THING WHICH COULD HAVE INSULTED THEM WAS THE PROCEDURE; ISN'T THAT CORRECT?

A. --AGAIN I GO BACK, FRANKLY, STEWART, TO BARRY'S QUESTION. I DO NOT WANT TO SPEAK FOR OR ADDRESS MYSELF

TO WHAT MAY HAVE BEEN IN THE MINDS OF THE JORDANIAN GOVERNMENT. I JUST DON'T THINK IT WOULD BE PROPER.

Q. CAN I PIN DOWN ONE MORE THING ON THIS -- BECAUSE THE JORDANIAN GOVERNMENT STATEMENT MADE A PARTICULAR POINT OF COMPLAINING ABOUT THE DELIVERY DATES WHICH DID NOT SUIT JORDAN. THE LETTER DOES CONTAIN SPECIFIC DATES. DO THOSE STAND?

A. I DO NOT KNOW WHAT THE DELIVERY DATES ARE IN --

Q. THEY'RE IN THE PRESIDENTIAL LETTER.

A. I WOULD ASSUME IT WOULD STAND, BUT I JUST DO NOT KNOW. I DID NOT CHECK THAT SPECIFIC ITEM. I DO NOT WANT TO GET INTO THE DISCUSSIONS THAT WE HAD WITH THE JORDANIANS.

Q. --WHILE WE'RE TALKING ABOUT THE MIDEAST MISSILES, THIS MORNING THE PENTAGON SPOKESMAN SAID THAT THE DEFENSE UNCLASSIFIED

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DEPARTMENT WAS NEITHER CONSULTED NOR INFORMED ABOUT THE PERSHING MISSILE CLAUSE IN THE ANNEX TO THE INTERIM AGREEMENT. CAN YOU TELL US NOW: DID THE SECRETARY OF STATE CONSULT OR INFORM ANY OTHER AGENCY IN THIS GOVERNMENT WHILE NEGOTIATING THIS AGREEMENT, PARTICULARLY WITH REFERENCE TO THIS ANNEX?

A. I CANNOT ANSWER THE QUESTION; I DO NOT KNOW THE ANSWER.

AS THE SECRETARY SAID -- I BELIEVE WHEN WE WERE IN CINCINNATI -- THIS IS A SUBJECT THAT WILL BE DISCUSSED.

THERE IS NO COMMITMENT ON IT. PRESUMABLY, THIS WAS PART OF THE ORIGINAL GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL'S MILITARY SHOPPING LIST.

NOW, WHETHER THIS PARTICULAR UNNAMED PENTAGON SOURCE WAS AWARE OF THAT --

Q. HE'S NAMED. THIS IS JOE LAITIN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE. HE'S THE SPOKESMAN FOR DEFENSE.

A. MAYBE HE DID NOT KNOW ABOUT IT, MAYBE SOME OTHERS DID IN THE PENTAGON.

LET ME LOOK INTO IT. I JUST DO NOT KNOW.

Q. BOB, MY QUESTION IS SOMEWHAT BROADER THAN THAT. MY QUESTION IS: DURING THE NEGOTIATION STAGE, DID THE SECRETARY OF STATE CONSULT OR INFORM ANY OTHER AGENCY

OF THIS GOVERNMENT -- INCLUDING THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL, FOR EXAMPLE?

A. I DO NOT KNOW. I WILL BE GLAD TO LOOK INTO THAT ASPECT OF IT FOR YOU. I JUST DO NOT KNOW. I WOULD ASSUME THAT. I KNOW DAILY REPORTS WENT BACK TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES; BUT WHETHER IT WENT TO THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL, THE PRESIDENT BEING THE HEAD OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL, I JUST DO NOT KNOW.
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Q. ALSO THERE WAS A QUESTION LEFT HANGING FROM YESTERDAY WHICH MAYBE YOU CAN CLEAR UP ABOUT WHEN EXACTLY THE TWO-WEEK PERIOD MENTIONED IN THE INTERIM AGREEMENT STARTS AND ENDS.

A. YES. THE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO PARTIES BEGAN ON THE 9TH. AND SO THAT WOULD MEAN THAT, TECHNICALLY, THE TWO-WEEK PERIOD WOULD BE UP THIS COMING MONDAY, THE 22ND.

Q. AND WILL THERE BE A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION PUT FORWARD IN THE CONGRESS BEFORE THEN, AND VOTED BEFORE THEN? SINCE CONGRESS ISN'T MEETING OVER THE WEEKEND, CLEARLY CONGRESS IS NOT GOING TO MOVE BEFORE THE 22ND -- THIS PUTATIVE DEADLINE.

A. THAT IS PROBABLY A PRETTY ACCURATE ASSUMPTION.

Q. SO WHAT HAPPENS THEN? IS IT A MOVABLE FEAST -- IT'S JUST FLEXIBLE?

A. YES; I THINK IT IS FLEXIBLE. MAYBE IT WILL BE DONE IN THE MIDDLE OF NEXT WEEK, WE WOULD HOPE. ALL WE CAN SAY IS THAT WE HOPE IT WILL BE DONE AS PROMPTLY AS POSSIBLE; AND SO THAT THERE WILL NOT BE A GREAT HIATUS BETWEEN THE SIGNING OF THE PROTOCOL AND THE CONGRESSIONAL ACTION, WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE IT ACTED ON AS QUICKLY AS WE CAN.

Q. WHEN YOU TALK ABOUT THE PROTOCOLS BEING SIGNED, PRESUMABLY WHEN THEY'RE SIGNED THAT COMMITS BOTH PARTIES TO IMPLEMENT THE AGREEMENT. ARE YOU SURE THEY'RE GOING TO SIGN IT BEFORE THEY HAVE CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL FOR THE 200?

Q. THE ISRAELIS SAID THEY WON'T SIGN UNTIL IT'S APPROVED BY CONGRESS.

A. IT WAS MY UNDERSTANDING -- MAYBE I AM WRONG. IT WAS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT THEY WOULD SIGN BUT THAT THE

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AGREEMENT WOULD NOT BE IMPLEMENTED UNTIL --

Q. SIGNING COMMITS BOTH PARTIES. SIGNING IMPLIES AGREEMENT.

A. AS I SAY, THE NEGOTIATIONS AND TALKS BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES ARE PROGRESSING WELL, AND IT MAY BE THAT THEY WILL HAVE FINISHED THEIR WORK BY MONDAY -- WHICH IS THE END OF THE TWO-WEEK PERIOD AS STATED IN THE AGREEMENT.

Q. CAN I ASK A TECHNICAL QUESTION WHILE YOU'RE TAKING THAT QUESTION? COULD YOU CHECK WHETHER IT'S THE U.S. GOVERNMENT UNDERSTANDING, AS IT APPEARS TO BE YOURS, THAT THEY WILL BE SIGNED EVEN IF THE AMERICAN TECHNICIANS QUESTION ISN'T RESOLVED?

A. YES. THAT IS WHAT TED HAS RAISED, AND I WILL.

Q. WELL, MY QUESTION IS IF THERE'S BEEN A CHANGE IN U.S., YOU KNOW, STATE DEPARTMENT APPROACH TO THE THING?

A. NO. THERE IS NO CHANGE. AND MAYBE I'M ALL WET, SO LET ME JUST CHECK INTO IT. BUT THERE'S NO CHANGE THAT I KNOW OF. LET ME JUST LOOK INTO THAT ONE TECHNICAL POINT.

Q. BOB, I'LL TRY IT ONE MORE TIME -- MAYBE AT EVERYBODY'S SUFFERANCE, I SUPPOSE. MAYBE I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO DOESN'T

UNDERSTAND THIS MISUNDERSTANDING.

IS IT THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S POSITION THAT THERE WAS A QUOTE, A "MISUNDERSTANDING," UNQUOTE? SO FAR IT'S A FLOATING MISUNDERSTANDING, IN MY MIND.

WAS IT A MISUNDERSTANDING ON JORDAN'S PART, OR WAS IT A PUBLIC MISUNDERSTANDING, A CONGRESSIONAL MISUNDERSTANDING- OR WHAT? I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT MISUNDERSTANDING THERE'S BEEN--WHOSE MISUNDERSTANDING?--LET ALONE THE SUBSTANCE OF THE MISUNDERSTANDING. WHO HAD THIS MISUNDERSTANDING THAT HAS NOW MAGICALLY BEEN CLARIFIED?

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A. LET US GO BACK TO YESTERDAY. AS BOB FUNSETH TOLD YOU, WE FELT THAT WE WANTED TO SEEK CLARIFICATIONS ON THE PUBLIC STATEMENT MADE BY THE JORDANIAN GOVERNMENT YESTERDAY. WE WANTED CLARIFICATIONS ON THAT.

IN OBTAINING THESE CLARIFICATIONS ON THESE PUBLIC STATEMENTS, IT BECAME VERY CLEAR THAT THERE WERE SOME MISUNDERSTANDINGS -- WHICH I WILL NOT GET INTO. AS A RESULT OF THE CLARIFICATIONS WE HAVE RECEIVED AND THE CONVERSATIONS THAT AMBASSADOR PICKERING HAD, THE MISUNDERSTANDINGS HAVE BEEN CLEARED UP; AND, THEREFORE, WE ARE GOING TO PROCEED AS PLANNED. WE ARE NOW ABLE TO PROCEED AS PLANNED.

Q. WELL, YOU'RE SAYING WE MISUNDERSTOOD THE PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT?

A. WE WANTED TO SEEK CLARIFICATIONS OF THAT STATEMENT, BARRY, YESTERDAY.

Q. WELL, YOU SAID THAT THERE WAS A MISUNDERSTANDING AND A MISUNDERSTANDING IS AN ACT OF MIND. IN WHOSE MIND, IN WHICH SIDE'S MIND, WAS THERE A MISUNDERSTANDING?

A. I AM NOT GOING TO GO INTO THE MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND THE DETAILS.

Q. I DON'T WANT YOU. I MEAN, IT'S HOPELESS TO TRY TO GET YOU TO GO TO THE SUBSTANCE OF IT. I JUST WANT YOU TO TELL US WHO HAD THE MISUNDERSTANDING.

DID JORDAN MISUNDERSTAND THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER, AND THAT'S BEEN CLARIFIED NOW?

A. I DO NOT WANT TO GET INTO THE SUBSTANCE OF IT, BARRY.

Q. THAT'S NOT THE SUBSTANCE, BOB. THIS IS SILLY.

Q. BOB, IF I CAN JUST PICK THIS UP FOR A MOMENT, I THINK UNCLASSIFIED

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BARRY'S QUESTION IS AT LEAST WELL-INTENDED IN THIS SENSE -- IT IS ENTIRELY POSSIBLE THAT THE JORDANIANS DIDN'T MEAN THAT THE DEAL WAS OFF, FOR ALL OF THEIR RHETORIC YESTERDAY --

Q. THAT'S RIGHT.

Q. -- AND THAT WE MISUNDERSTOOD THE TONE OF THEIR STATEMENT.

WAS THE MISUNDERSTANDING ON THE PART OF THE UNITED STATES, OR WAS THE MISUNDERSTANDING ON THE PART OF JORDAN?

THAT'S NOT GETTING INTO SUBSTANCE.

A. I JUST DO NOT WANT TO COMMENT ON IT NOW. THAT IS ALL.

Q. BOB, COULD YOU CLEAR UP ONE POINT IN THE PUBLIC STATEMENT? ONE OF THE STATEMENTS MADE BY AMMAN RADIO WAS THAT JORDAN REGARDS ALL WEAPONS THAT IT PURCHASES AS JORDANIAN AS SOON AS THEY REACH JORDAN. DO THEY STILL INSIST UPON THAT STANCE?

A. I CANNOT GIVE YOU AN ANSWER TO THAT. I DID NOT LOOK INTO THAT PARTICULAR ASPECT OF IT.

Q. THAT PARTICULAR ASPECT OF IT RUNS COUNTER, OF COURSE, TO OUR LEGISLATION ON MILITARY SALES -- IF THEY CLAIM TO HAVE COMPLETE SOVEIEIGN OVER WEAPONS THAT WE GIVE THEM AS SOON AS THEY ARRIVE IN JORDAN.

A. I THINK I JUST HAVE TO STAY, YOU KNOW, WHERE YOU HAVE THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER AND THE LETTER OF OFFER AND STAY WITH THAT.

Q. YES, BUT THAT WOULD AFFECT A LOT OF OTHER WEAPONS THAT JORDAN ALREADY HAS. PERHAPS THERE OUGHT TO BE MORE CLARIFICATIONS.

A. WE HAVE RECEIVED SUFFICIENT CLARIFICATIONS IN ORDER TO GO FORWARD WITH THIS DEAL.
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Q. I WOULD LIKE TO CLEAR UP -- IF YOU COULD TAKE THE QUESTION --WHETHER IT'S YOUR UNDERSTANDING THAT JORDAN IS GOING TO INSIST UPON THAT VIEW: THAT EVERY WEAPON WE SELL

TO THEM BECOME JORDANIAN AS SOON AS IT ARRIVES IN THEIR TERRITORY, WITHOUT OUR HAVING NO SAY IN HOW THE WEAPONS ARE TO BE USED.

A. LET ME SEE WHAT I CAN FIND OUT.

Q. BOB, I ASKED YOU DOES JORDAN ACCEPT THE TERMS STATED IN THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER -- AND YOU SAID "YES."

A. YES.

Q. WELL, THAT'S IN THAT LETTER. YOU'RE NOW UNSURE ABOUT PART OF THE LETTER?

A. NO, I AM NOT. I HAVE NOT GOT THE TEXT OF THE LETTER IN FRONT OF ME. WHETHER THIS SPECIFIC POINT IS IN THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER, I CANNOT RECALL. BUT I OBVIOUSLY STAND VERY DEFINITELY ON WHAT I SAID WITH REGARD TO THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER -- NO AMBIGUITY AT ALL. KISSINGER

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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